NATURAL NEWS

The Field Museum
Exploring
The Earth And Its
People

Weekly Staff Newsletter
January 29, 1999

Field Museum scientists and programs featured in *National Geographic*

The latest issue of *National Geographic* (February 1999) features a series of articles by Virginia Morell covering the topic "Biodiversity: The Fragile Web." Featured in text and photographs are our own **Steve Goodman** (Zoology), **Tom Schulenberg** (Environmental and Conservation Programs), and **Danilo Balete** (former Philippine Biodiversity Conservation Training Program participant and UIC graduate student with **Larry Heaney**). Larry Heaney (Zoology) served as a consultant and advisor for development of the articles, helping Morell and Frans Lanting (the photographer) with selection of sites and issues, and reviewing facts and figures for portions of the final text.

The article "Wilderness Headcount" focuses on Tom's work with Conservation International RAP (Rapid Assessment Program) teams to survey the biological wealth of the eastern Andean slopes in Peru, one of the world's biologically richest areas. The article "Restoring Madagascar" highlights the biodiversity surveys and training programs that Steve Goodman has organized over the last decade, crediting him with the discovery of literally hundreds of new species. The report "In Search of Solutions" describes the plans that Danny Balete and the Haribon Foundation have developed to lessen the impacts of development on Philippine rainforests, focusing in this case on Mount Isarog National Park, site of long-term Field Museum training and research programs.

It is striking that three of the five articles lead off with Field Museum scientists and programs, and although the articles do not specifically refer to The Field Museum's prominence in biodiversity conservation, this aspect of The Field Museum's initiatives, which encompass many additional similar research and training programs around the world, is a clear "subtext" throughout the issue. In addition to their substantial impact in the public arena, these three scientists have made superb collections of mammals, birds, and other organisms for The Field Museum that are studied by scholars the world over.

Submitted by the Academic Affairs office

FIELD NOTES

Week of February 1

Public Events/Special Events

Museum Open Until 8 p.m. Monday

Dreamworks
- Monday 5:30 p.m.
  SFH, JST, Founders Room.

Motorcycle Film Series
- Tuesday 6:30 p.m.

Hogs In The Hall
- Friday 6:30 p.m., SFH

African Heritage Festival
- Begins Saturday

Staff/Volunteer Events

Aerobics Class
- Tuesday & Thursday 5 p.m.
  Ground Floor, East Stairwell

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CONGRATULATIONS!!

CCUC and Anthropology congratulate **Jacqueline M. Carter** and Mr. Kenneth Gray on their marriage. Jaci will now be known as **Jacqueline (Jaci) Gray**.

Submitted by **Alaka Wali**

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Funding news for Fishes Biomechanics Laboratory

The Biomechanics Lab is happy to announce several new projects and personnel for 1999. Located on the Ground Floor in the Division of Fishes (Zoology), the Biomechanics Lab is where we study animal behavior and physiology using techniques such as high speed video analysis. Animals of interest include coral reef fishes, piranhas, water snakes, and turtles.

Congratulations to **Richard Blob** who will soon begin as a Postdoctoral Research Associate in Zoology. Rick was recently awarded the prestigious National Research Service Award from the National Institutes of Health for his proposal entitled "Ontogeny of Locomotor Muscle Function in Turtles." Rick's research will investigate muscle function during various locomotor behaviors in turtles, such as swimming and walking. Rick will study species that are specialized for an aquatic life or a terrestrial existence, and species designed to both walk and swim efficiently. Rick suggests (and NIH agrees) that turtles will make an excellent model system for examining changes in muscle function during growth and development.

A second grant has been awarded to **Mark Westneat** and **Jeff Walker** to continue their work on aquatic locomotion in fishes. The Office of Naval Research has granted three years of support totaling $373,000 to Mark and Jeff for their studies of underwater flight behavior in coral reef fishes. These fishes flap their pectoral fins like wings to produce a highly efficient and highly maneuverable form of swimming. Mark and Jeff are interested in the structural design, physiology, behavior, and evolution of this form of locomotion within a diverse radiation of reef fishes that is worldwide in distribution. On the practical side, these fishes, with their stiff bodies and fin propellers, make an excellent model for underwater vehicle design.

A related grant from the National Science Foundation will support three years of research on the evolutionary relationships of the labrid fishes. NSF has granted $200,000 to Mark Westneat over three years to investigate the family tree of these same fishes that flap their wings to swim. Combining data on anatomy of the fishes with information on their DNA will provide an estimate of how these animals are related. The Biomechanics Lab is gathering data on their swimming behavior and feeding mechanics so that the phylogeny can aid in examining the evolutionary history of these interesting behaviors.

Ballard attends CAREER Conference

Bill Ballard (Zoology/Insects) recently returned from a three-day gathering of recipients of the National Science Foundation's Faculty Early Development (CAREER) Awards. From January 10-12, Bill joined some four hundred CAREER recipients for three days of poster sessions, seminars, and presentations. The CAREER award, NSF's premier activity in support of the integration of research and teaching, supports exceptionally promising junior faculty who are committed to that integration. Bill received his three-year, $350,000 award in 1997.

$$ FINANCE FORUM $$

Many thanks to Finance Department members who could be bribed with pizza to stay late Wednesday night and work towards resolving our 1998 accounting activities: **Dana Brink, Judy Burns, Tom Geary, Kim Green, Marcellous Henderson, Sue Jarold, Erica Kelly, Paula Robinson, Randy Smith,** and **Lisa Wodis**. This is an exceptionally busy time, and your extra efforts are appreciated.

Looking for something to do on Friday, February 5?

Come pig out at

"Hogs in the Hall!"

Field Associates event celebrating
The Art of the Motorcycle

Special Staff Discount Price!

$20 buys you: Food, open bar, silent auction/raffle, "Best of Leather" fashion frenzy featuring the premier of Harley-Davidson's spring line, pinball machines, virtual reality motorcycle rides, live band, a special ride through *The Art of the Motorcycle* and MORE!

***** ALL FOR $20!!! *****

WHEN: Friday, February 5, 6:30 p.m.
WHERE: Stanley Field Hall
WHO: YOU!
SPONSORED BY: The Field Associates

?s: Call Janet, ext. 210

DON'T MISS IT!!!

Wheels and Reels! Working-Class Film Heroes
Tuesday, Feb. 2
6:30 p.m.

Loosen the tie or slip off the heels and unwind with Kris "TigerLady" Slawinski, producer and host of Open Road Radio, for a fun and informal evening of motorcycle movies and roadhouse treats. Beer, hotdogs, and popcorn will be available for purchase to complete this total immersion experience! Chuck Kleinhans, Associate Professor of Radio/Television/Film at Northwestern University, will discuss the film *Evel Knievel,* a tribute to the famous biker stunt man. This will be followed, naturally, by a screening of the 1972 Marvin J. Chomsky film, featuring George Hamilton as our hero. The Education Department invites all staff members to join us at no charge; extra tickets (for staff family and friends) are $5, $8 general admission. For advance tickets or for more information call ext. 854 and talk to **Mark** or **Sandra**.

Submitted by **Johanna Krynytzky**

STAFF REMINDERS

The new access code for the door leading to PR from the North elevator and for the ground floor administrative area doors is **412**.

Submitted by **Laura Dini**

Department call trees for emergency closing notification should be forwarded to the Security Services Department by February 8. Use the insert in last week's *Natural News* for your call tree, or adapt it if necessary. If you have any questions, call **Ron Cundiff**, ext. 856 or **Tina Augustus**, ext. 238.

Submitted by **Ron Cundiff**

Origins ain't paleo

The Field Museum's *Origins* saw an extramural extension last weekend in a combined performance by the new music group CUBE and the multimedia MASS Ensemble. Gathered under the program title *Spirits and Shadows* were several pieces linked thematically by referring to or drawing inspiration from the music and cultures of early people, but the programming overall seemed dedicated to exploring and juxtaposing some of the less obvious interpretations of "origins." The minimalist composer Steve Reich's "Clapping Music," for example, while using synthesizer-influenced variations on a set pattern, underscores that the unmediated human body has always been available as a sound source. In a strikingly different idiom, Janice Misurell-Mitchell's "Gift of Tongues," a piece for flute and voice that recounts the story of Babel and the explosion of languages, electronically alters the sung or spoken words to render them unintelligible. (We are minded that Babel is not a pretty story; the gift of tongues was packaged as punishment, designed to shatter the common language of an overreaching people.) Patricia Morehead's neotonal opera "Black Hawk Speaks," a portion of which was premiered at the concert, uses standard sung operatic delivery, words spoken in a Native American language, and, among the instruments, the long bow, a 25-foot stringed sound sculpture, resembling half a lyre resting on its side, that was created recently by Chicagoan Bill Close. The introduction of new idioms and new sound sources (as well as the recycling of venerable forms and the electronic alteration of acoustic signals) in a performative exploration of origins suggests that delineating origins is conceptually more complex than lining up the ancestors and awarding the blue ribbon to the oldest.

Project Millennium is a three-year, city- and statewide initiative presenting nearly 1,000 programs by 180 organizations in 1999 alone. Various themes are treated sequentially; the Origins theme is the focus of programming throughout the city in January and February.

Submitted by **Marjorie Pannell**

Clarifications regarding employee discount policy

Please note that the 20% discount given at the Museum stores, Corner Bakery and McDonald's is a benefit to Museum employees (on our payroll) and volunteers. This discount *does not* apply to contractors or other related Museum workers. Recently, there have been a number of situations where non-staff have demanded to obtain the discount. This places the employees in these areas in a very awkward position, especially when visitors are present. Remember, it is important to have your picture ID visible at all times, so that the cashiers can give the discounts to the appropriate individuals. If you have individuals in your department that are or could be confused by this policy, please make sure that they are informed. Thank you for your understanding and assistance.

Submitted by **Shawn VanDerziel**

FAN MAIL

Recently, **Paul Brinkman** (Geology) and **Dennis Kinzig** (Volunteer) conducted tours for 50 visitors from the Illinois Center of Rehabilitation and Education. Several members of the group sent the following letters expressing their appreciation for their outstanding presentation. My thanks goes to Paul and Dennis, also.

Laurie Sanders

To Laurie:

Please pass these letters on the Dennis and Paul, the excellent volunteers who conducted the tour for our group. He was so good. Thank you again.

To Dennis:

My name is **Carmelita Donald**, I am a blind student that visited the museum on Wednesday. I really enjoyed myself listening to you talk about dinosaurs and the other animals. This was the first time I've been to a museum since I've been blind. I just wanted you to know it was wonderful, and when I return I will bring my two children.

Thank you,
Carmelita Donald

Dear Dennis and Paul:

I liked the trip on the 13th of January to the museum. I liked the description of the dinosaurs. I liked the exhibits. Thank you for a wonderful time.

From,
Michael Schlueter

Dear Dennis and Paul:

I would like to thank you for the tour of the museum on Tuesday, January 13, 1999. I came to the museum with my school. We saw dinosaurs of all sizes. It was very interesting. Paul told us how they prepare the bones and the different tools they use. We also went to see the killer lions from Africa. After we saw all the exhibits, we went to lunch at McDonalds. All of the people there were very helpful.

Thank you very much,
Judy Nelson

P.S. (note from Judy's instructor) Just wanted to let you know that this is the very first letter Judy has typed since losing vision 2 years ago.

Sue Brust

Natural News

The *Natural News* is edited by **Rodger Patience** in the Development office (ext. 617, patience@fmnh.org) and **Erica Kelly** in the Finance Department (ext. 584, ekelly@fmnh.org). Submissions are welcome via e-mail or on disk in Microsoft Word or WordPerfect format. The deadline for submissions is Tuesday at noon. Remember – write early and often!